enewsletter

A publication of aglearn+

WINTER 2013

Follow us @AgLearnToday

Starting the Year Off Right

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The new year brings exciting changes and even more to discover at AgLearn!

In this issue, learn how AgLearn is going mobile and getting social with the Mobile AgLearn program and Twitter. Other features include the most popular courses of 2012, upcoming live events, well-being resources, and a forum for managing your IDP. All get you off to a great start in 2013!

Announcing AgLearn Mobile

You should have access to learning when it's best for your schedule and your life. That's why the new MobileYou program was designed to give you that flexibility on the device you prefer – smart phone, iPad,® or tablet. Courses are now available and more will be released over the next several weeks.

+ Get Books 24x7
A web-based tool that provides access to thousands of IT and business books

+ Access your "To-Do" List
Review the courses you need to complete on your training plan

+ Take Mobile AgLearn courses!
Look for the release of the first set of courses this quarter!

Save the Dates!

For These Great Upcoming Live Events from SkillSoft!

MARCH 19

March 19 at 12:00 p.m. EDT
Quiet: How to Harness the Strengths of Introverts to Change How We Work, Lead, and Innovate
Presented by Susan Cain

APRIL 16

April 16 at 12:00 p.m. EDT
Jamming: The Art of Getting Innovation Done
Presented by John Kao

Improve Your Life And Well Being

It's important to take the time to improve yourself. The Well-Being Essentials™ collection, found in **Books 24x7**, is a full library of assets to help you balance your work and life for success in both. The range of titles extends from health to personal happiness to financial stability.

One principal part of the collection focuses on personal finance; in this series, Debbie Mason, a Certified Financial Planner,™* provides the training and tools to help you become a smart money manager.

Even if you are satisfied with your financial plans, make sure that you are taking full advantage of your federal benefits.

Plan Your Savings Strategy with the New TSP!

If you need to decide on the TSP, Roth TSP, or both, this course will get you ready to use the new TSP as well as other "tax smart" options to build retirement savings.

Early-Career TSP, Retirement, and Financial Planning for FERS (DMASON 106)

Employees in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), will learn how to choose investments for your TSP and other savings; which types of investments to use for short-, intermediate- and long-term goals; and how different tax-saving accounts (e.g., TSP, TSP Roth, IRAs, EE and I bonds) can help your savings grow.

**Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards Inc. owns the certification marks CFP®, CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ and in the U.S., which it awards to individuals who successfully complete CFP Board's initial and ongoing certification requirements.*

Tell Us What You Think!

We are constantly striving to evolve our communications to better reach you. Help us by responding to our **online survey** by March 31, 2013.

TOP 10 COURSES

Check out these popular courses or find one that's right for you.

1. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Problem Solving/Decision Making
2. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Work/Life Balance
3. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Perseverance and Flexibility
4. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Managing Conflict
5. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Managing Diversity
6. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Leading Organizational Vision
7. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   The Emotionally Intelligent Leader
8. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Creative Thinking
9. **Leadership Advantage Test Yourself**
   Leading Innovation
10. **Personal Productivity**
    Self-organization and Overcoming Procrastination

NEW FORUM HELPS WITH INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS (IDPs)

Your IDP Questions Answered

Team AgLearn has established a forum on the USDA Connect website. To review discussions or submit a question, visit **USDA Connect**, and look for the forum in the AgLearn+ Adding to Your Knowledge Community. Here are some recent questions and answers posted:

I created my IDP a few days ago and now it won't open. I wait for a while and then get a communication error. What happened?

Users recently have been reporting this issue. In each case, the user had too many AgLearn Items associated with the IDP and/or too many Items on their To-Do List.

AgLearn allows each user to have approximately 40 uncompleted Items associated with their user record. Often, users add courses to their **To-Do List**, and then neglect to complete those courses, increasing the number of courses that are associated with their accounts. Also, some users are adding too many AgLearn courses as activities to help them reach a developmental goal. If the number of uncompleted courses on your To-Do List *plus* the number of AgLearn Items added to your IDP totals more than 40, this may cause problems with your account and deny you access to your IDP.

If you can view your Home Page and your To-Do List, start by removing (hover over the title of the course to view the pop-up menu, then select **Remove**) any courses that you self-assigned and don't plan to complete within the next few weeks. After you've removed as many courses as you can this way, try to select the IDP Goals pod again to view the My Goals Workspace. You may need to log out of AgLearn and log back in again to view your IDP.

If you can view your IDP, **review your goals** to make sure you've added only one or two AgLearn courses per goal as activities. Don't worry – you can always add more activities after you complete the first set. Keep in mind, the total number of courses on your IDP plus your To-Do List should not exceed 40.

If your Home Page or IDP still does not respond, contact your AgLearn Agency Lead.

My supervisor tells me she can't see my IDP. How can I verify that I submitted it?

First, make sure that the IDP "tennis ball" isn't in your court.

From your AgLearn Home Page, click the **IDP Goals** pod to view the **My Goals Workspace**. From the **View Plan** list, select your current plan. In the upper right corner, do you see an Alert message with a link that tells you "**Changes to the Plan require approval**"? If so, select the link, then click the **Submit for Approval** button to send the plan to your supervisor.

If you do not see an alert message, select your plan from the **View Plans** list. Is the status of your plan *Pending* **Approval**? If so, look to the right of the screen for a green box with a link to **View Plan Approvals**. Select that link. If your supervisor's name is the last person listed with **No Action Date** next to her/his name, try this:

Click the **Recall Plan** button; then click **OK**. Once the plan is back in your "court", click the **Submit for Approval** button to send it back to your supervisor. If your supervisor still doesn't see it, contact your agency's help desk or AgLearn Lead to report the problem.

How do you delete a goal from a pending or approved IDP?

The status of a plan determines what you can or can't do to a goal. If you have submitted the plan for your supervisor's approval, the plan is in Pending Approval status and you cannot make changes to goals while it is in that state. However, you can recall that plan (click the **Recall Plan** button) which will take it out of your supervisor's queue and return it to you. At that point, you can hold your mouse over the goal name until the pop-up menu appears. Click the **Remove Goal** link to remove the goal from your plan.